C48 Government. Activities for the moral and material welfare of the native peoples embrace a wide range of administrative functions, such as the penetration, pacification and control of hostile districts, the institution of law and order, the establishment of schools, enumeration of the population, the inspection and protection of native labour, medical patrols, the mapping of morbidity areas, the training and appointment of native medical assistants, village hygiene, the establishment of hospitals for treatment, the training of natives in agriculture, the inspection of native plantations, and innumerable duties of a general nature. In this work the Government is assisted by the various missions in the Territory.

Among the problems of native welfare facing the executive organization of the Administration, the question of depopulation probably stands first. While so much is being done in a general way to cope with the variety of factors on which welfare is dependent and to eradicate the more readily ascertainable causes of diminution, the time is ripe for a definite and comprehensive attack on the whole problem. Our District Staff includes a number of young officers, who have had the advantage of an anthropological training in the Sydney University. They are stationed in outlying parts of the Territory as Patrol Officers, and, since their work keeps them constantly in intimate touch with the people of their divisions, a great deal of valuable information should be forthcoming.

648 659 Before launching a definite programme for the treatment of the population conditions, however, we must first determine whether depopulation is actually taking place, where and to what extent it is taking place, and, if possible, why it is taking place.

What is required, therefore, is a series of demographic surveys spread over the Territory for the purpose of ascertaining the conditions of the population, locating areas where depopulation exists, and gathering data showing its extent and the factors that are contributing to it. Possible experimental restoratives should then be considered before an expensive programme of treatment is actually laid down. Once the condition in any particular area can be set out statistically in terms of causal factors, the nature and possible extent of which can be indicated to the executive organizations whose duty it is to apply practical measures, the scheme of attack could be directed along definite lines of a social, economic, religious or physiological character, according to the requirements of the campaign.

121 464 With the object of devising a concise method suitable for investigations of this nature, I visited Kavieng district early this year, and, with the approval of His Honour the Administrator, made a survey among

3: Chinnery G, E-5 (1929) 1931 OM10 New Ireland OM10

the inhabitants of the east coast of New Ireland from Kavieng to Karu, a district for many reasons eminently suitable for the study in question. In the first place, it had always been, and still is, one of the most important centres in the Territory for the recruiting of native labour. Scattered along its coast are many of the most flourishing plantations in New Guinea, the owners of which depend on local natives for the bulk of their labour supply—a dependence specially marked just now owing to the depression in the copra market, which compels industrial organizations to observe the greatest economy. The immediate advantage to the planter of local labour over labour recruited from other parts of the Territory is the saving of recruiting fees, passage moneys, transport and incidental costs through his being able to secure the natives he requires from the villages around his plantation, and the advantages to the native population of being able to place its available workers on some plantation near their villages are obviously so great that everything should be done to encourage conditions that make it possible. A further inducement to the studying of the population in this region is the position that has lately arisen owing to an increasing European interest in local lands for agricultural purposes, resulting during the last few years in numerous applications for leaseholds, of which many were being held in abeyance until an inquiry could be made into the future land requirements of the native inhabitants. In German times considerable areas of land were alienated and freehold grants given to European planters, who utilized these rights to such advantage that here and there along the coast are numerous productive and exceedingly valuable coco-nut plantations. The land in the district is suitable for the cultivation of coco-nuts. It is traversed from end to end by a road good enough for motor traffic. It has a large population, the climate is excellent, and there are several anchorages in convenient centres where small steamers are able to pick up copra—the very conditions to encourage European settlement. Now arises a question which cannot be determined until a close survey has been made of the population itself; i.e., whether in the interests of the natives and their future requirements any further land should be alienated, a point of especial importance since the natives themselves now own coco-nut groves, which they are being encouraged to extend, while at the same time they are receiving instruction from officials of the Department of Agriculture in the planting and maintaining of such properties.

Just as in matters of land and labour, so in the question of trade, the natives are brought closely into contact with the European population. It is to the European that the native sells the products of his coco-nut groves, his surplus native food, pigs, fish, fruit, fowls, eggs and in some places trochus-shell, snail shell and bêche-de-mer, for which he receives in return money, rice and other European foods, and trade

3: Chinnery G, E-5 (1929) 1931 OM10 New Ireland OM10

progress of the new cultures. Among the children now being educated, however, the changes wrought by the civilizing processes are steadily bearing fruit.

NATIVE LABOUR.

During the early years of German control, and while efforts were being made to amalgamate the native stocks, able-bodied men and women were recruited in relatively large numbers for work in different parts of the Territory and in German colonies beyond the Territory.

In 1909-10, however, the number of natives recruited for work outside the district decreased considerably, owing, no doubt, to the plantations then being developed in New Ireland, which were able to offer local employment to the natives of the district. In that year the recruiting of unmarried women from New Ireland was prohibited, a step by which the German Government hoped "that the extraordinary scarcity of women under which New Ireland has directly suffered for years in consequence of the unmarried women being taken away, will gradually be rectified, and so counteract the falling-off of the population."

Hoffman* points out that the able-bodied male natives recruited from the East coast in 1911 numbered 810, and in 1912 this number increased to 1,147. There was no record of the married and unmarried women recruited during that time. Hoffman goes on to say: "It is difficult to draw any conclusion from the present lists and records as to whether and how far the shortage of women brought about by recruiting at present exists. As has been mentioned before, records of the numbers of recruited women are lacking. . . . It is a fact, however, that the natural shortage of women is made more or less acute by recruiting. There is no proof to show that it is brought about by recruiting."

During my enumeration of the population the names of 925 men and 101 women were recorded "absent under indenture." This figure represents 12 per cent. of the total population, 25 per cent. of the adult male population and actually 27 per cent. of able-bodied males. Approximately 550 males and 60 females are employed by Europeans and Asiatics between Kavieng and Karu. The remainder are distributed in other parts of New Ireland and the Territory, a fair number of men and women being engaged in domestic service within the township of Rabaul, in which work they show special aptitude. Thirty-four per cent. of the labourers are married.

Native labourers employed on plantations near their villages are in the satisfactory position of being able to spend at least every week-end and often every night with their families. This is an ideal condition from the point of view both of the planter and of the labourer. It

*Government Gazette, German New Guinea, June, 1913.

3:Chinnery G, E-5 (1929)1931 OM10 New Ireland OM10

466 frequently happens that the plantation owner or manager is thus brought intimately in touch with all the people of the villages to which his employees belong, and one hears of many acts of kindness and consideration on the part of the employers towards the fellow-villagers of their labourers, such as the free treatment of sick, &c. I heard of one planter on the east coast road who not only places his plantation hospital at the disposal of the people of surrounding villages, but both he and his wife actually go among them and encourage them to come in whenever they are in need of careful treatment, to this end often incurring considerable expense in drugs and food.

000 I think that the employment of local natives should be encouraged in every way possible. As I have pointed out already, it is far more economical for the planter to secure his labourers from adjacent villages than to recruit them from other parts of New Guinea. It also lessens the drain on the population if able-bodied men available for plantation work serve on some place near enough to their villages to enable them to continue the thread of village life. For these reasons I have made a recommendation to the Administration that the recruiting of natives of the Kavieng-Karu district for work outside New Ireland, excepting for skilled and domestic work, be prohibited.

The few that engage in skilled labour and domestic work in other parts of the Territory make no appreciable difference to village life, and, since work of that kind provides an avenue of usefulness to natives adapted for it, I think it should be kept open for them. What is desired is to prevent the district being drained of its best blood. This can be effected by prohibiting general recruiting for work in other districts.

464 In examining the tables, we find that the percentage of natives under indenture is larger in some villages than in others. Where these natives are engaged on local plantations the numbers are, for reasons given, not so alarming as they appear to be. In fact, it suggests a trend in the right direction, for in proportion to the number of local natives employed is indicated the influence of the employer and the manner in which he is fulfilling his part in the work of progress.

FOOD.

262 The usual native foods are planted in the gardens, and people of the coastal villages appear able to secure fish, lobsters, and various shell fish. Pigs are bred in the villages, and wild pigs are hunted in the bush. In the mountain villages vegetable food is more plentiful than on the coast, where the ground is not so fertile, and gardens, especially 438 those of certain villages, are some distance away. There is, however, constant trade in foods between the bush and coastal communities